

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A wheel assembly for a vehicle, the assembly comprising:

a wheel rim adapted to support a tyre;

a first support plate mounted to said rim;

a second support plate adapted to be mounted to an axle;

at least one first coupling ~~means~~ device, connected between said first and second support plates, for transferring torque between said first and second support plates; and

at least one second coupling ~~means~~ device, connected between said first and second support plates, for transferring radial and axial forces from said first support plate to said second support plate;

wherein the or each said first and second coupling ~~means~~ device are incapable of transferring, from said first support plate to said second support plate, radial or axial forces, tending to remove the assembly from the axle, and exceeding respective predetermined levels.

2. (Currently amended) An assembly according to claim 1, wherein at least one said first coupling ~~means~~ device comprises at least one torque transfer ~~means~~ device adapted to transfer torque from said second to said first support plate.

3. (Currently amended) An assembly according to claim 2, wherein at least one said torque transfer ~~means~~ device includes at least one body member having at least one first engaging ~~means~~ device for enabling the or each said body member to slide in a first direction relative to said first support plate, and at least one second engaging ~~means~~ device for enabling the or each said body member to slide in a second direction; not parallel to said first direction, relative to said second support plate.

4. (Currently amended) An assembly according to claim 2 ~~or 3~~, wherein at least one said torque transfer ~~means~~ device includes at least one body member and a plurality of first linkages pivotably connected between at least one said body member and said first support plate, and a plurality of second linkages pivotably connected between at least one said body member and said second support plate.

5. (Currently amended) An assembly according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein at least one said second coupling ~~means device~~ further includes at least one first coupling member connected between said first and second support plates and adapted to fracture as a result of application thereto of radial or axial forces exceeding said respective predetermined levels.

6. (Currently amended) An assembly according to claim 5, wherein at least one said first and/or second coupling ~~means device~~ includes a plurality of second coupling members adapted to fracture as a result of fracture of at least one said first coupling member.

7. (Currently amended) An assembly according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein said second support plate is adapted to be mounted to said axle via a gearbox.

8. (Currently amended) An assembly according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein said second support plate defines a region of decreasing cross section in a direction transverse to said axle.

9. (Currently amended) An assembly according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, further comprising at least one removable securing ~~means device~~ for securing said assembly to the axle.

10. (Canceled).

11. (Currently amended) A vehicle comprising:

(i) a chassis;

(ii) a cab for accommodating at least one occupant;

(iii) at least one wheel assembly comprising:

a wheel rim adapted to support a tyre;

a first support plate mounted to said rim;

a second support plate adapted to be mounted to an axle;

at least one first coupling device, connected between said first and second support plates, for transferring torque between said first and second support plates; and

at least one second coupling device, connected between said first and second support plates, for transferring radial and axial forces from said first support plate to said second support plate;

wherein the or each said first and second coupling device are incapable of transferring, from said first support plate to said second support plate, radial or axial forces, tending to remove the assembly from the axle, and exceeding respective predetermined levels; and

(iv) a respective axle provided on the chassis for supporting the or each said wheel assembly.